

On the other hand, a new-born child may be adversely affected by the diet 734
or activities not only of its mother and father, but also by those of any others 746
who come near it. Mother and child should not be visited, moreover, by 750
persons who are in any way "abnormal." For the Carib this includes—besides
those who are deformed, disabled, or lacking in some sense or faculty—all
who are, to use a current expression, "heaty": this epithet being applicable
both to pregnant or menstruating women, and to anyone who is momentarily
heated by exertion, excitement, or emotion.

Girls and women are required to observe both dietary and occupational 754
restrictions during their menstrual periods. At these times, they must on no 761
account eat any products of the chase killed by dog or gun. One informant
told how his dogs had inexplicably become heavy and incapable of speed; and
how, on hearing a sort of slopping noise in their bellies, he had made investiga-
tions, and discovered that his own sister, out of gluttony, had concealed her
condition and partaken of his last catch. Some say that a gun or dogs so
"spoiled" may be "blessed," and then put back to rights; but that in this case,
it is the guilty woman who will then suffer for her negligence. Nor must men-
struating women handle the hunter's dogs or weapons, cook food, or take part
in ceremonial songs and dances. They should not, moreover, wander abroad
nor bathe in the river, since spirits of the bush and of the water alike are ad-
dicted to women in this condition.

In British Honduras, though no longer in Dominica, the bereaved spouse 764
must observe certain restrictions on diet and freedom of movement; but the 766
extent and duration of these are largely dependent, at the present time, upon
the degree of conservatism prevailing in the family concerned. However, it is
generally held to be dangerous for a widow to go to the manioc-field for several
months—some say eight—after the death of her husband.

From a comparison of the two sets of data, it seems clear, at least, that the 764
"mystical participation" of the father in the life of his new-born child was—751
and is—by no means unique in Island Carib concept; and that the form, dura-
tion, and sanctions for the restrictions tended to be the same when these were
undergone for one's own sake alone as when they were imposed, primarily,
for that of another. As we have seen, not only the new-born child, but also its
father, the sick and the wounded, and, in fact, all those turning one of life's
critical corners, are or were thought to be endangered by a sort of physical
exuberance emanating from heated, overfed, sexually or otherwise excited,
pregnant, or menstruating bodies, be it their own or those of others associating
with them. For the seventeenth century, the same period of seclusion—one or
two months—is indicated for the bereaved, the slayer, the new father of a first
child, or the adolescent; and for the first three of these, the same sanctions—
growing old sooner, being less sure-footed, etc.—are mentioned explicitly.
The voluntarily undergone deprivations and sufferings of the old-time Carib

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591 (1) Father; mother; married daughter, her husband and their children; two
 592 unmarried daughters, both with children; one unmarried son.

Three other married daughters have separate establishments in the immediate vicinity, as does one married son. Another married son lives with his wife's family some miles away, and one married daughter lives with her husband's people.

(2) Widowed mother; married daughter, her husband, and their children; widowed son; grandson (the latter is the son of another married daughter who has a separate neighboring establishment).

The widowed son's children live with their maternal grandmother.

(3) Father; mother; mother's pre-marital married daughter with her pre-marital son and her husband; mother's pre-marital son; unmarried daughter and her children; son; small son; small daughter.

586 Legal divorce is unknown to these Caribs, though they apply the word "divorce" to any separation between couples married legally or otherwise, of which there are several examples. In one case the wife left her husband because of ill-treatment; in another the husband abandoned his wife and fled to Guadeloupe (where he remarried) because he was in trouble with the English law; while yet another husband "divorced" because he could not get on with his wife's mother. Separation on grounds of sexual infidelity is very rare—chiefly because such a reason is considered too trivial to break up the union. Widows and widowers are free to remarry as and when they please.

585 Newly married couples as such are subject to no special restrictions, nor is
 [60] there any formal avoidance of parents-in-law. Customs and beliefs affecting
 [61] behavior at the nuptial period, during pregnancy, and after childbirth have been discussed in another paper.⁷ In as far as the latter concern the father as well as the mother, they show vestiges of the couvade.

547 As illegitimate children and their parents are in no way stigmatized, abortion
 544 is rare and generally condemned (although on account of changing economic conditions it appears to be now on the increase). Parturition takes place in a crouching position, usually with the aid of the parturient's mother or of some
 • [62] old sage-femme, who employs massage and various herbal teas or potions (such as a draught of a boy's urine) if she considers it necessary to hasten labor. When she has cut and bound the navel cord, and bathed the child, the sage-femme (or maternal grandmother) takes the infant on her lap, and inserts a finger under
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⁷ Douglas Taylor, *Carib Folk-Beliefs and Customs from Dominica*, B. W. I. (Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol. 1, pp. 307-330, 1945), p. 319.